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T A L E.

In TWO CANTOS.

Naturam expellas furca licet, usque Recurret. HOR.

——— *A cruel Spoiler came,
Crop'd this fair Rose, and rifled all its Sweetness!* OTWAY.



L O N D O N.

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TWO CANTOS

Hon.

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LESBIA:

T A L E.

C A N T O I.

LESBIA the fair, the gay, the young,

The Joy, the *Burden* of my Song,

Was at fifteen what Men adore,

And envious Women blacken o'er.

Alexander's * Mistris, which

He'd such tuneful Parts of Speech,

And, half so soon, with all her Art,

He'd a Soul, or steal an Heart,

er. 5. Not Alexander's Mistris, &c.] Every Body has heard of Paris and Helen; but perhaps every
may not know that he was also called Alexander.

Reclaim

Reclaim a philosophic Look,
 Or wean a Scholar from his Book,
 As inexperienc'd *Lesbia* seen,
 At artless innocent fifteen.

'Twas at a Moon-light Morning Hour,

* When Fairies take their fancied Tour,

And Poets, restless Night and Day,

Snore out a Poem or a Play,

That tir'd with Pillow, Sleep, and Ease,

She gather'd Scraps of Thought like these:

" My good Mamma has now confest,

" The *Parsley-Bed* was all a Jest,

" Contriv'd by Nurses sage to gull

" Children that never went to *School*.

" *Eroto's* rev'rend Youth declares,

" 'Tis plain as A, B, C, or Pray'rs,

" That I am now a Woman grown,

" And such are never blest *alone*.

" He says, through universal Nature

" There's a Propensity in Creature,

* Ver. 14. *When Fairies, &c.*] Aged Matrons are of Opinion that those Gentry make their Excursions chiefly in Moonlight Mornings.

" Whi

Which fans the Fire of youthful Blood,
To thaw the Ice of Solitude.

Hence every Bird and every Beast
Chuse a Companion from the rest,
Whose soothing social Chear is tasted,
When Pastures fail, or Fruits are blasted.

All but the Phœnix, hapless Bird,
That erst *Arabia's* Sons admir'd,
Which having many a tedious Year,
Sought for a Mate both far and near;
Resolves the lonesome World to shun,
And with her Wings collects the Sun;
In whose hot Beams, her Nest of Spice,
And she herself flame in a trice.

" GREAT Lengths indeed he oft will go,
And quotes a Text to prove it so.
He says 'tis only Lovers know,
Or taste of happiness below,

That they who foster Nature's Fire
Find all Things jump to their Desire;

Ver. 37. Which having many a tedious Year, &c.] *Pliny* assures us upon his Honour, that a cer-
Phœnix of his Acquaintance lived six hundred and sixty Years.

*The Lover was very
low upon my word*

" While ev'ry Virgin in the Nation

" Is in a State of *Reprobation* "

Thus ended *Lesbia's* Meditation.

And now the Moon that just before,

Had silver'd Trees and Steeples o'er,

Retir'd before the tim'rous Ray

Of *Phœbus* darting Life and Day,

And *Lesbia's* lovely piercing Eyes

Peep'd thro' the Curtain with Surprise

To find it was high time to rise.

Fenc'd round in filken Petticoat,

And what assiduous *Betty* brought.

She thoughtful counts her Fingers Ends,

And down the whiten'd Stairs descends.

The hidden Fires of Fancy heat her

While Mamma's Morning Blessings greet her.

Slow rowl'd the Axle-tree of Time,

Till Welcome *Rotos* came to dine,

Whose Presence chas'd away the Gloom,

And chear'd th' unsocial Dining-Room.

(Oft unperceiv'd Love's Lightnings fly,

By Parents or be Guardians by;)

swiftful Ogles flew askance,

Lesbia darted half a Glance ;

Look across the Table lent,

thank'd her for in am'rous Squint ;

chatting round of that, or this,

75

anks *Madam*, *Sir*, and (*nods*) to *Miss*,

Dinner was o'er ; and Æther now

on its Livery of Blue ;

gentlest Zephyr fan'd th' Extremes

Phæbus' overheating Beams ;

80

black'ning Cloud deform'd the Sky,

ruffling Wind blew Tyranny.

With such a Nymph, on such a Day,

taste the Sweets of op'ning *May*,

at Graduate would not quit the College,

85

bid Adieu to cobweb Knowledge ?

Wonder then, *Erotos* fought

Round-about of Tongue and Thought,

to propose a sober Tread,

Lesbia o'er th' inliv'ning Mead.

90

Tho' *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*'s Lines

oleful) Love has Luck sometimes :

For unsuspecting Parents see
No Harm in walking and agree.

Lesbia, the smiling Meadow's Pride,
Trips graceful by her Lover's Side,
Who sees no Verdure in the Spring,
Nor hears the Grove with Music ring;
And *Flora*'s richest of Perfumes,
In vain exhale ambrosial Gums,
While *Lesbia* blooms a fairer Flow'r
Than that which *Pluto* heretofore
From *Enna*'s Field with Rapture bore.

With *Ars amandi* all by heart *(How he humphed)*
Right well *Erotos* play'd his Part; *(How six Times at least)*
Recited many a tender Verse
And *Sacharissa*'s Praise is hers.
Tho' scarce he saw the flow'ry Scene,
Daiesies and Vi'lets on the Green,
He notes as 'tis a Lover's Duty,
They blush at her superior Beauty.

Ver. 102 & 103. *Than that which, &c.*] *Proserpine* was gathering Flowers in a Field near *Enna* in Sicily, when *Pluto* stole her. The Story is told by *Ovid*. *Metam.* L. 5.

Ver. 105. *And Sacharissa's Praise, &c.*] *Sacharissa* was Mr. *Waller*'s Favourite.

Nearer and nearer he applies
 His Tales of soft *Idalian* Joys,
 As Bosom heaves, or Eyes invite,
 Or Virtue's Maxims lose their Might.
 Tells her, - for Woman Fields look gay,
 For Woman wear their best Array;
 That Nature spread a Carpet there,
 T' accomodate some falling fair.
 O *Lesbia*! *Lesbia*! how divine,
 That Hand, that Face, that Breast of thine.

115

She pants, her fluttering Pulses move,
 Like *Dido*'s to Distraction drove;
 Whom the good *Trojan*, who related
 His dire Mishaps and Deeds ill-fated
 Stole pitying from herself away,
 Soft Sighs succeeding *lack-a-day*.

120

As he that *pius* was before
 Prov'd in *Spelunca Dux*, no more;
Eros Man of *Ox* and Letters,
 People will mimic still their Betters)

125

130

Ver. 128. *As he that pius was, &c.*] Mr. Addison observes that *Virgil* has every where given *Aeneas* the epithet of *pius*, except in his Interview with *Dido* here alluded to; when he has very prudently changed for *Dux Trojanus*.

The treacherous Tongues of Fame declare,
Acted *Æneas* to a Hair.

C A N T O II.

TO Dabblers in the Deeds of Cupid,
'Twill seem impolitic and stupid,

To change a Meadow for a Square,
And make the Joy repeated there,
But know the all-rememb'ring Muse
Scorns *gentle Readers* to abuse,
Who often has by Moon-light seen
An am'rous Parley on the Green.

For Love is not confin'd to Place,
To shining Sun, or *Cynthia's* Face,
To windy, calm, or rainy Day,
To *Primrose Hill*, or Cock of Hay,
To Curtains, Walls, or Midnight Hours,
To Cots, or Sheds, or grassy Bowers ;

Ver. 132. *The treacherous Tongues of Fame, &c.*] The Antients tell us that *Fame* has many Tongues, and that these Tongues are ever blabbing.

Ver. 5. *But know the all-rememb'ring Muse, &c.*] The *Muses* being the Daughters of *Memory* are never known to forget any thing.

boundless flies the Hemisphere
 thern and Northern, here and there,
 nestles sometimes in a Square.

ere, stolen from Mamma and Maid,

Lesbia with her Lover stray'd

id with his Eyes-Brows, strok'd his Chin

Chit-chat and Debates begin,

prittle-prattle, which none think,

Lovers worthy Pen and Ink.

otic'd fled the Hours away,

Week was hardly half a Day,

oft mistook his Date,

Lesbia wonder'd 'twas so late.

now of Wings another Pair

Tempus wore, or seem'd to wear,

d with a double Fleece his Toes

save his Corns from Rubs and Blows,

stole as soft as Thieves retreat,

in pilf'ring Eggs, or Butchers Meat.

Too true ye say, ye moral Writers,

at joys are Griefs, and Sweets are Bitters,

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35

That Ease is Toil, and Health is Pain,
 And all beneath the Moon is vain.
 For e'er Dame *Luna* on her Brow
 Had sprouted thrice her Horns anew,
 What *Lesbia* strove in vain to hide,
 The practis'd prying *Betty* spy'd;
 Who, sooth'd with Shillings and fine Speeches,
 A while conceals as Mifs beseeches;
 And, like a trusty Confidant,
 Ly'd to Mamma, and anxious Aunt.
 Of Vapours, Gripes, and all the Pains,
 Of which Virginity complains.

But spite of ev'ry Art they try'd,
 Love, that like wilful Homicide,
 Will still itself, itself reveal,
 Told, by Effects a mournful Tale.

Not dreaming *Plato's* fanfied Passion
 Could give to such Effects their Fashion,
 Effects which make, as soon as known,
 Papa cry *Wh-re!* Mamma undone!

Ver. 45. *Ly'd to Mamma, &c.*] It has been fashionable time immemorial, for Servants to lye for Masters and Mistresses. Nay from what *Hector* says to his Wife's Maids, II. VI. Ver. 376. It appears have been a common Custom even then.

Ah! *Lesbia!* was it to survive

The Laugh of every Nymph alive,

That never in a *Square* or Grove,

Did dy'd away in hidden Love ;

Was it thus to suffer Wrong,

You learnt to lisp a foreign Tongue,

Wasting a *dying Fall*, and dance,

And many a modish Art of *France*,

That, when skilfully apply'd,

Bring stubborn Wisdom to their Side,

Like *Stoic* Pride for Beauty pant,

And th' arrant'st *Cynic* a *Gallant*.

From plodding senatorial Brains,

And Peers lead captive in Chains ?

Is it, before the Sun was ris'n,

That this, you conn'd your Catechism ?

And slighted Females oft complain,

Of perjured Love, and faithless Men ?

And many a *Warning-piece* to shew,

They never care what Harm they do,

That joy to ruin (such the Trade is)

For hapless young believing Ladies ?

Ah me! how cheerless and forlorn
 How tedious Noon, and Night, and Morn!
 How faint, Oh *Lesbia*! (sad Mischance!)
 Those Eyes that murder'd every Glance!
 Where sculking fly in Ambuscade,
 The God of Love his Light'ning play'd.
 Cheeks once like rosy-finger'd Morn,
 Pallid and wan, the Seat of Scorn!
 The Tongue that let no Subject pass,
 Can only mutter out alas!
 " Oh that the Hour of whisper'd Jest,
 " The destin'd Hour worse than the rest,
 " Were gone! adieu to faithless Men!
 " I'd ever hate myself and them!"
 Resolves and Promises absenting,
 Hung on the Lips of Miss repenting,
 Till Time, that ends all human Things,
 Shook Melancholy from his Wings,
 And Slander wearied with her Toil;
 Then *Lesbia* learnt again to smile,
 Zephyr that with *Aurora* play'd,
 (As Verse-men have the Tale convey'd)

Dispers'd all rash Resolves in Air,
 And Lips and Cheeks are what they were;
 False Man again his Art begun,
 And *Lesbia* is again undone!

100

Let Governants and Mothers all,
 Paste up these Maxims on the Wall,
 Beware of waking Dreams in Bed,
 Beware of Maying, every Maid.

105

When Virgin Innocence is gone,
 Nor Wit nor Beauty can atone.
 When Frailty once subdues the Will,
 Then Woman will be Woman still.

110

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F I N I S.



100

spared all rash Resolves in Air,
and Lips and Cheeks are what they were;

the Man again his Art begun,

and Logic is again undone!

Governants and Mothers all,

so up these Maxims on the Wall,

ware of waking Dreams in Bed,

ware of Mating, every Maid,

then Virgin Innocence is gone,

Wit nor Beauty can atone.

then Prudery once subdues the Will,

an Woman will be Woman still.

105

110

P I M I S

